

# The Scourge of Child Labour in Ondo State and Its Social Implications

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**Abstract:** - The phenomenon of child labour is a global malaise. Children all over the world have been exposed to hard and labourious tasks, some of which have been found to be dehumanizing, having serious social and health implications. This study “The scourge of child labour in Ondo State and its social implications”, is aimed at investigating the existence of child labour its causes, constraints and social implications and how to eradicate it with particular interest in Ondo State. Ondo state, is one of the states in the south-west geopolitical zone in Nigeria. The state was created in 1976. The state is bounded in the north-west by Ekiti state, west central by Osun State, South-East by Ogun and Delta states and in the South by the Atlantic Ocean. The strategic location of Ondo State has made it one of the largest, the most populated states and one of the urbanized states in Nigeria. The increase in population of Ondo State has forced many families to be engaged in human activities to avoid starvation, scavenge for living that could be described as child labour. Despite measures put in place by the federal government and NGOs to deal with the issue of child labour which includes, the Child’s Right Act (CRA) 2003, trafficking in persons (prohibition) Law enforcement and Administration Act 2003, yet child labour has persisted till date. This paper suggested that government should make legislature that would tackle the problem of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria, effective implementation of policy that would outlaw all forms of child labour and enforcement of Girl-child educational policy.

**Keywords:** Child Labour, Child Abuse, Ondo State and Social problems.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, just like any other country of the world, the sight of small children toiling long hours under dehumanizing condition have caused an intense debate among policy makers, scholars and human rights activists over the past two decades. This is because children are seen as precious gifts to man by God for the progression of human race. They are very tender, fragile and gentle hence they need support, protection and tender love, care from parents and the society. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, industrial revolution in Great Britain, public and the policy makers have attempted to come to grip with the causes and consequences of child labour. Although child labour has been in existence throughout history, the difficult conditions under which children work has become more evident. International Labour Organization (2000) defined child Labour as work that deprives children of their childhood, potentials, dignity, and work that is harmful to their physical and mental development. ILO gave the effect of child Labour as mentally, physically, socially or morally

dangerous and harmful to children. In most developing nations due to explosive population growth, high rates of unemployment, poverty, inflation, malnutrition, bad leadership, corruption and low wages, child labour has become more visible because of the increase in the number of children producing goods for export (Bass, 2004).

Child Labour has forced millions of Nigerian children out of their homes, and out of school into the labour world and does not leave them there. It goes on to drag children to all sort of social problems such as illiteracy, prostitution, kidnapping, trafficking etc. Child labour remains a major source of concern in Nigeria, despite legislative measures taken by the government at different tiers. The International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1988, estimated that 24.6% of children between the ages 10-14 in Nigeria were working (World Development Indicators, 2000). Before that period in 1994 the United Nations Children’s. Emergency Fund (UNICEF) reported that 24 percent (12million) of all children under the age of 15 were engaged in economic activity (UNICEF/FOS, 1995). Ajah (1990) suggested that the sight of seeing children of school age in most big cities as well as rural areas today, trading food on the street, tanning and drying raw leather products, herding animals, fetching water for commercial purposes, washing dishes at restaurants, collecting firewood for business, hawking wares at kiosks and inside Traffic, harvesting crops in farms or commercial plantations, begging for alms, amongst other activities in ridiculous.

International Labour Organization (2002), issued a report that the global figure of child labourers was approximately 250million. The report added that the ages of these child labourers range between 4 and 14yrs with 120million of them working in full time capacity. Also, in another report of the International Labour Organization (ILO) issued in 2002, maintains that Asia and Africa have the largest number of working children between the ages of 5 and 14. A total number of 107 million or 60% of the World comes from the Asia pacific region; 48 million or 23% comes from Sub-Saharan Africa; a total of 17 million or 8% live in the Caribbeans, 13 million or 6% are found in the middle East and North Africa and 2 million or 1% is found in the advanced industrialized nations. From the distribution given by International Labour Organization (ILO), it can be deduced that the phenomenon of child Labour is overwhelming in developing countries. The revelation of the International

Labour Organization (ILO) that “41% of all children between age 5 and 14yrs old are involved in economic activity in African as against that of Asian and Latin America which are 21% and 17% respectively is worrisome. Because child labour in sub-Sahara Africa is more in proportion to the population, this prompted the study to investigate the social implications, of the scourge of child labour in Ondo State.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

During the pre-industrial revolution in Europe, the family structure was extended in nature and children with their parents usually engaged in work-related activities which were mostly domestic, family farms etc. It was seen as normal, being part of the child’s socialization process. Today, all these have changed. Attitudes about work and childhood have undergone a great transformation since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the notion that children should work has been rejected in many countries (Fyfe, 1989). However, Fyfe (1989), captured that within the developing world where child labour remains common, such attitude about childhood and child labour still persist.

In Europe during the industrial revolution, child labour came about as a response to the increasing demand for human labour occasioned by the industrial revolution. With the development of industries, children were subjected to employment terms which most were not clear to them thereby leaving them at the mercy of their employers. Similar developments are today’s reason for the surge in the number of child Labourers in Asia. Aston (1989) in an article monitored in the web captured this in a better perspective. He said, to overcome labour shortage, factory owners had to find other ways of obtaining workers. The available solution to the problem was to buy children from the orphanages and work houses. The children became pauper apprentice and were made to sign contracts that easily made them the property of the factory owners’.

According to Lopez (2001), the practice of child labour in agriculture in Mexico is growing under the impact of the country’s successive economic crisis and the rise in export-oriented agriculture joint ventures between Mexican and US, European, and the Japanese markets are achieving great competitiveness and to meet with the growing rate of industrialization, especially in developing countries like Asia and Latin America, children in labour have to be engaged. South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS), in its publication ‘save the childhood, (1989), defined child “Labour” as a set-up where an employee (Labour) sells his/her labour to an employer with certain work related conditions such as wages, amenities bargaining power, rights and legal safe-guards. International Labour Organization (1989), wrote that for a child to be adjudged to be in labour, there must be conditions of employment, stipulating work-related benefits, and sanctions. It also implies that not all work performed by children can be termed child labour.

Aderinto (2000) in his studies suggested that children labourer are regarded as “street children” or children of the street” who run away from parental or guardian abuse, leaving them to eke out a living on their own. This name ‘street children’ paralyzed them from thinking ahead thus rendering them socially and economically useless and hopeless. Most times, they go through social, physical and health consequences such as drug addictions, physical and sexual abuse such as rape and molestation, malnourishment, extortion, police harassment, and participation in harmful or delinquent activities (Okeahialam, 1984). In some other studies, child labourer face robbery, inadequate sleep due to fatigue and long hours on the job, and confinement in remand and juvenile homes (Aderinto, 2000: Charles and Charles, 2004).

Most times child labourers suffer from mental related sickness such as, stigmatization from the public and press, feeling of dejected, stress and irritability, personality disorders and anti-social behaviour, and alienation and isolation from their family have been identified (Amin 1994, Grier 2004). According to Arends-Kuenning (2003), child labourer has a significant negative effect upon the level of education, school attendance, literacy, grades, leisure time, and overall social life. From the ongoing, a child worker faces a lot of social difficulties with its attendant consequences in increase in social vices such as drug additions, robbery, rape, thuggery, prostitution and alcoholism (ILO, 1993).

## III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### *The culture of poverty theory*

Oscar Lewis (1996), an American anthropologist introduced the idea of culture of poverty to explain child labour from the perspective of poverty. He developed the concept from his fieldwork among the urban poor in Mexico and Puerto Rico. He suggests that every where poverty is found to exist makes people in those places exhibit feelings of marginality, helplessness, inferiority and dependence. In Nigeria, the poor often develop various ways by which they cope with their conditions in form of take actions and engage in many activities that will ensure a quick escape from the realities of poverty, one of which is child labour.

Lewis (1996), stated that the “culture of poverty” theory is presumed on; the level of individual, the parents, care givers and guardians who experience the above feelings suffer from weak ego structure, lack impulse control and show little ability to defer gratification, have a sense of resignation, fatalism and an unstable family structure. These qualities therefore make them to believe that giving out their children to labour in a view to earn extra income for family upkeep is their only source of hope (Ering, 2000). Lewis was of the opinion that, these people show a great deal of self-perpetuating patters and echoes of poverty which succeeding generations could imbibe and exhibit as life styles, belief and value that are not simply an alternative to low income.

The theory has been criticized for painting a picture of generic poverty, which in reality shows distinct and unique features. Its application is alien to western societies and even research in Africa shows that there is a high level of community action by engaging in self help projects like the Esusu Thrift Contribution (Okolo, 2002). Also, family heads are getting involved in political activities and other private practice to augment their finances, instead of involving in child labour.

#### IV. CAUSES OF CHILD LABOUR IN NIGERIA

The existence of child labour in Nigeria can be attributed to several factors. These as will be discussed, may be cultural, parental, educational, personal and economic. Specifically, the various causes of child labour in the Nigeria state are:

- i. *Poverty*: Poverty is obviously one of a dominant factors for child labour in Nigeria. The inability of most families to live a decent day to day life as a result of lack of means, has sometimes made families to force their children out of school, to be employed as child labour and contribute to the family income. For instance, in Ondo State, children from poor families earn their school fees through child labour. They may sometimes skip classes in order to work.
- ii. *Broken family*: Many socio-cultural institution such as marriage and family structure have collapsed in Nigeria. Many families have broken up, and some divorced or separated, while others have irreconcilable differences. This result to lack of love, care and affection toward their children, child neglect and abuse. Children in such families with little or no income from parents and relations have to engage in all sorts of child labour to sustain themselves in areas such as feeding and daily needs.
- iii. *Urbanization*: The quest for better lives in cities has brought tremendous pressure on young ones to move to cities and urban centres where they hope to get jobs. Sometime, children whose parents are poor and unable to care for them have joined in the job search for the time being. Because of the fact of not having a place to rest and stay, these children work at every enclave to keep going and the deprivations they suffer while working puts them in the class of child labourer.
- iv. *Family size*: Due to polygamous marriage and extended family affiliations in Nigeria, many families are too large. In such families, it becomes impossible for parents to adequately cater for their numerous children in terms of food, health care and education. In other to survive, most of these children may be sent out to engage in child labour such as working in building construction sites, truck pushing etc. In families like these, children leaving home is a welcome relief to the parents as this will reduce the mouths to feed.

- v. *Cultural factors*: Naidu (1986), suggested that child labour may depend on the culturally determined and institutional roles and functions of the socialization process, and the formative attitude towards children in the society. The work children do depend on cultural aspects as concerns the concept of the child, his or her roles in the family and society (WHO, 2016). According to Ebigbo (1988) there is a belief that children are the property of their parents and that physical punishment is best in dealing with the difficult child. In such families, children are used as money making machines by their families without due consideration for the detrimental effects on health and education of those children.
- vi. *Ignorance*: High rate of illiteracy and greed on the part of parents and children may lead to child labour. In Nigeria, most illiterate families do not send their wards to school. With little or no access to education, the children are forced to join tedious adult work that may be dangerous to their health in order to support the family income.

#### V. FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR

There are different forms of child labour in Nigeria which may be summarized in the following sub-headings.

*Child labour in agricultural sector*:- In states like Ondo, Oyo, Osun and Ekiti, most child labour occurs in agriculture and in the formal sector of the economy, where these and other provisions of the labour act are neither monitored nor enforced. Children work on family farms while others are employed on farms outside of the family household. In both instances, child labour has been found to have negative consequences for the children. Some of those children are engaged in such dangerous job that may lead to lack of pay, long hours on the job, physical exhaustion, physical abuse, and exposure to toxic pesticides and herbicides (Arat, 2002).

##### *Child Prostitution*

Commercial sexual exploitation has become a problem of special concern to various authorities in Nigeria, both because of it extend and link with commercial trafficking in women and girls and because of its role in the development of the HIV/AIDs epidemic ravaging the country. According to Chickwem *et al*, (1989), Adegoke and Adedoyin (1998), child prostitution is now common in towns such as Port Harcourt, Lagos, Ibadan Calabar, Owerri and other parts of the country. These child prostitutes were found in hostels, brothels, bars and streets. They operate outside their places of origin, from different ethnic groups etc. These are mostly children who were left with grandmothers in their local areas and there are tendencies to have them come from polygamous homes and divorced or separated families.

##### *Domestic Services*

Domestic child labour in Nigeria takes the form of house helps, baby sitters, cooks and errand boys. This is

anchored on the pull and push factor. The pull factor result from the increase of entry of married women into the labour market, thus necessitating their demand for house helps while the push factor on the other hand resulting in the demand of use of children for domestic service is poverty. No matter the factors responsible for domestic child labour, it is characterized by long working hours, lack of rest days, some are made to wake up earlier than adults to work, and sleep late in the night than other members of the family, yet most of them are denied of care, affection and love, schooling and leisure. Many of these children are often abused by their own parents and relations, let alone strangers who employ them. (ILO, 2016).

### *Hawking*

In Nigeria, many school aged children make sales through carrying goods from one place to another, traveling averagely 12-13 hours daily to sell goods. Many children hawk for the upkeep of themselves and mostly their families. Hawking is more common in Nigerian cities than in rural areas. Child hawking has a lot of social implications on the child hawker. A child may contract HIV/AIDs through rape, or be injured by people of evil intentions. Children who hawk may lead to truancy, missing lessons, total absenteeism in the class, low academic achievement and high rate of school dropouts. Lack of education becomes a ditch in the road to their progress in life.

### *Child Begging*

This has negative psychological, social and health consequences on the child. Begging is a nuisance worldwide. However, in a nation like Nigeria, many Nigerians have become beggars of some sort, as they have sustained beginning with philanthropic sustentation or pretentious and religious justification (Akinbola, 2015). Notwithstanding, the issue of begging in major cities in Nigeria is a worrisome issue as it has become one of the numerous dimensions of child labour, a nuisance in the environment.

Child begging are the most vulnerable because they are from families of the poorest of the poor. They suffer severe psycho-social consequences of engaging in demeaning type of activity and being exposed to constant abuse and aggression from the public.

In the southern part of Nigeria, begging was not significant though among the Yorubas, it was culturally expected that mothers with many children would beg as a symbolic expression of their willingness to demean themselves for the survival of the children.

Begging is most wide-spread in the North where begging for alms is widely regarded as a religious obligation. The largest percentage here belongs to the Almajiri system- a semi-formal system of quranic education, in which Muslim families send their children from their homes into major towns and cities to live with and receive quranic education from Islamic teachers called "Malam". These children are

known as 'Almajiris' (Aliyu, 2006). According to ministerial committee on Madrasah Education in December, 2010, it has been estimated that Nigeria has about 9.5 million Almajiris (US Embassy, 2010).

## VI. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHILD LABOUR

Child labourer and working children are the epitome of abuse and exploitation. They are often the victims of their employers and sometimes, even their parents. These children are not given the opportunity to study, and their health and social well-being are not left untouched, just for sake of earning money for either themselves or their families. In some cases, hawking and begging expose the child to social hazards like rape. Child rape during begging for alms has led to many child beggars and hawkers sustaining, Injuries, unwanted pregnancies and contracting sexually transmitted diseases include HIV/AIDS, Gonorrhoea etc. (The Nation Newspaper, 2014). These children will certainly add to the high numbers of people living with this deadly disease- a scourge the government is battling already to combat.

Child labour has exposed many children to drug abuse and addiction. Sometimes, most of these child labourers worked in labour intensive sectors such as construction industries and in order to cope with the demands of the job, they sometimes take high drugs such as glue and Indian hemp to fit into the work thereby leading to drug abuse (Zaler et al, 2014). The high incidences of child drug abuse has a multiplier effects on the child and the society. These children in most cases are rendered crippled, unhealthy, and most importantly uneducated. The depriving of these children the opportunity to learn becomes a ditch in the road to their progress in life. Uneducated child are exposed to bad companies and so are easily manipulated to doing all sort of evil things ranging from pick pocket to high level of criminality.

Some of these children are cheap tools of destruction in the hands of politicians and extremists groups. The United State Department (2013) and Shepter (2012) reported that almajiris participated in political and religious riots and violence in the Northern Nigeria, hence some of them are used for terrorists attack such as suicide bombers by the Boko haram extremists that threaten Nigeria nation up till date, claiming thousands of lives, properties and leaving other maimed

## VII. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study shall answer the following questions:

- i. What are the social effects of child labour in Ondo State?
- ii. What are the educational effects of child labour in Ondo state?

## VIII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts descriptive survey. The population of the study was the entire child labour in the state. The

respondents were selected through stage stratified random sampling techniques. In the first instance, two (2) local governments each from the three senatorial districts. The second stage was to select one major town in each of the local governments. Thirdly, major streets, markets, motor parks were selected. The sampling size was 1,800 child workers contacted from these areas. Out of the 1,800 children, 300 child workers of any sort were contacted from each of the 6 local governments. (6x300=1800). The interviewer sought the permission of the parents for a child to participate in the interview which was highly confidential between the interviewer and the interviewee. To participate in the interview, a household must have at least a child between the age of 5-17years.

The data collection instruments used for the study were structured questionnaire and indebt interview. The questionnaire was designed to reflect the research question. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentages and frequency.

Table 1: Personal Data. RESULTS

S/N	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	792	44%
2	Female	1,008	56%
		1,800	100%
3	Child age		
	5-7	198	11%
	8-10	252	14%
	11-13	375	20%
	14-16	432	24%
	17-18	558	31%
		1,800	100

The data in Table 1 showed that 44% (792) child labourers are male, while 56% (1,008) are females. 11% (198) children are between the age of 5-7years. 14% (252) are 8-9years old. 20% (375) are between 11-13years, 24(432) are 14-16years, 31% (558) are 17-18years.

Table 2: Reasons for child Labour

Reasons for child labour	Frequency	Percentage
I work to support my poor family	432	24%
Nobody cares for me	288	16%
I am forced to work	396	22%
We are too many in the family and the income is inadequate	360	20%
To keep myself busy	324	18%
Total	1,800	100%

In table 3, the data revealed that 24% representing 432 children work due to poverty, 16% (288) respondents do

child labour due to lack of care. 22% (396) are forced to work. 20% (360) children work due to large family. While 18% (324) work due to lack of what to do.

Table 3: Forms of child Labour

Forms of child labour	Frequency	Percentage
Hawking	576	32%
Begging	504	28%
Working in agricultural sites	216	12%
Domestic services	324	18%
Child prostitution	180	10%
Total	1,800	100%

The information in table 3 indicated that out of five (5) forms of child labour researched on, 32% representing 576 children, work as hawkers. 28% (504) are beggars, 10% (180) engaged in child Prostitution, 12% (216) work in agricultural sites while 18% (324) children are domestic servants.

Table 4: Social effects of child Labour

Social problems of hawking	Sometimes	Almost always	Total
Attempt to being kidnapped	3% (54)	12%(216)	15% (270)
Keeping of bad company	5%(90)	2%(36)	7% (126)
Rape or attempted rape	2%(36)	0%(00)	2%(36)
Tendencies to suffer violence or abuse	1% (18)	4%(72)	6%(108)
<b>Social problems of beggars</b>			
Attempt to being kidnapped	2%(36)	1%(18)	3%(54)
Attempt to being used for ritual	1% (18)	4%(72)	5%(90)
Suffer violence or abuse	3% (54)	2%(36)	5%(72)
Rape	2%(36)	0%(00)	2%(36)
Tendencies to use drugs	2%(36)	3%(54)	5%(90)
<b>Social problems of child prostitution</b>			
Attempt to being used for ritual	1%(18)	1%(18)	2%(36)
Contracting STD(s)	3%(54)	12%(46)	15%(270)
Use drugs and smoking of cigarette	2%(36)	3%(54)	5%(90)
Unwanted pregnancies/abortion	2%(36)	3%(54)	5%(90)
<b>Social problems of agricultural child labourers</b>			
Uses of drugs	3%(54)	1%(18)	4%(72)
Bad company	0%(00)	2%(36)	2%(36)
Rape of female child labourer	1% (18)	3% (54)	4% (72)
<b>Social problems of domestic servants</b>			
Sexual abuse (Rape)	2%(36)	3%(54)	5%(90)
Physical assault (Abuse)	6% (108)	4%(72)	10%(180)
Torture	5%(90)	2%(36)	7%(126)

The summary of data in table 4 indicated that 18%(324) of the respondents have had kidnapped attempt. 7% (126) had being attempted to be used for rituals. 13% (234) have had rape attempt. 9% (162) had kept company, while 21% (360) respondents experienced violence or abuse. 14%

(252) have used drug, 15% (270) experienced sexually transmitted diseases (STD). 7% (126) had experienced torture as domestic servants and finally, 5% (90) has experienced unwanted pregnancies/abortion.

Table 5: Social effects of child labors according to severity of the problems

	Rank	Almost always	Sometimes	Total
Contraction of sexually transmitted diseases	2 <sup>nd</sup>	12%(216)	4%(72)	16%(288)
Rape	1 <sup>st</sup>	17%(360)	81%(144)	25%(450)
Uses of drugs	4 <sup>th</sup>	4%(72)	6%(108)	10% (180)
Violence abuse	5 <sup>th</sup>	1%(90)	5%(90)	10%(180)
Bad company	6 <sup>th</sup>	2% (36)	4%(72)	6% (108)
Torture	7 <sup>th</sup>	4% (72)	1% (18)	5% (90)
Kidnapped	8 <sup>th</sup>	-	1% (18)	1% (18)
Ritual	8 <sup>th</sup>	-	1% (18)	1% (18)
Unwanted pregnancies/abortion	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4% (72)	7% (126)	11% (198)

The summary data in Table 5 according to the severity of social problems of child labour indicated that children suffer rape most. This came as a result of the vulnerability of the female child and the fact that they are weaker sex. 25% (450) of child labourers suffered from rape and sexual abuse, while 15% (270) child labourers experienced sexually transmitted disease (STD). The third

(3<sup>rd</sup>) in severity is unwanted pregnancies which account for uses of drugs that affect 11% (198) of the respondents. Others in order of severity include; use of drugs which is 10% violence abuse with 10% (180) respondents, bad company with 10% (180) respondents, torture affects 6% (180) respondents and finally kidnapping and ritual affect 1% (18) respectively.

Table 6: Educational effects of child Labour

Educational effects of child labour	Rank	Sometimes	Almost always	Total
I do not go to school all so that I can work	2 <sup>nd</sup>	00(00)	19% (342)	18% (342)
I miss class for work	5 <sup>th</sup>	8% (144)	5% (90)	13% (234)
I do not have time to do my home studies	3 <sup>rd</sup>	10% (180)	6% (108)	16% (288)
My parents/ guardian ask me to drop out of school for work	6 <sup>th</sup>	8% (144)	4% (72)	12%(216)
I work in the morning and attend afternoon school	4 <sup>th</sup>	9% (162)	6% (108)	15% (270)
I attend school in the morning and work after school	1 <sup>st</sup>	11% (198)	13% (234)	24% (432)

The data in table 6 revealed that the most severe education effect is the children who attend school were the morning and work in the afternoon in which 24% (432) children are affected. The second in rank are the children who do not go to school at all for them to work, they are 342 (18%). The third in rank is 16% (288) children who do not have time to do home studies. The fourth constitutes 15% (270) child labourers who do not attend school in the morning due to child labour. Second to the last in severity are those who miss class whenever they have worked to do. They constitute 12% (216) respondents who drop out of school for child labour.

## IX. DISCUSSION

The data in table 1 revealed that there are more female child labourers than male child labourers. This may be attributed to the fact that in Nigeria, male children attend school and are traditionally more preferred than female children who are easily given out for early marriage, house helps and hawking business. The data also indicated that child labour activities increase as the age of the children increases. The data in table 2 revealed that children engage in child labour due to the following reasons-poverty, broken family, family size and lack of schooling. However, poverty is the major cause of child labour in Nigeria (UNICEF, 2016).

The data in table 3 identified hawking, begging, working in agricultural sites, domestic services and child prostitution as forms of child labour as stated by the researcher.

The data in table 4 discussed the social effects on the child labourers. The findings showed that 18% (324) of the children had either be kidnapped or had attempted kidnapped./ the data also indicated high level of drug usage/abuse which may lead to addiction and results in mental problem later in life.

The study revealed that 7% (126) had being attempted to be used for rituals by evil and unknown people. The findings showed that 13% represent 234 experienced rape/attempt rapes which can result to HIV/AIDS. 21% (360) complained of having experienced violence or abuse. The findings also indicated that 14% (252) of the respondents had used drugs. 270 (15%) had been infected with one sexually transmitted diseases or another which can result to HIV/AIDS.

The findings also showed that 7% (126) who work as house helps had experienced torture. 90(5%) of the respondents stated that they had unwanted pregnancies/abortion. In area of Education, every child labourers has one academic problem or another ranging from children who go to school in the morning and turn to business of working after they come back from school, to those who do not even go to school at all. This is very serious and disturbing.

Child labour has been identified as the major hindrance robbing children of their education. Global partnership for Education in its 2015 report: Child labour and education progress challenges and future directions showed that child labour lower school enrolment ration, affects school attendance and performance.

Other information showed through direct interview indicated that 60% of the children (1,080) do not eat before setting out for work. 2% (36) of the child workers complain of having experienced a chase or having harassed by unknown persons during hawking or begging. Up to 10% (180) hawkers reported that sometimes they are not given accurate balance of money from their customers who use the children's lack of education to dupe them of their money, while some are not paid after sales by their customers who intimidate them with threats. 6% (108) of children reported of not being paid by their employers after the days labour.

#### X. RECOMMENDATIONS

The child labour phenomenon is a multi-dimensional complex problem and deep rooted in the socio-economic fabric of the society. There are many factors responsible to this complex problem, so it may not be wise to rely on one single approach to deal with it rather a comprehensive integrated approach is required to tackle and combat child labour.

Poverty has been identified as the major cause of child labour in Africa (Aderinto, 2000, Amin, 1994; Olutayo, 1994; Togunde and Carter, 2006). Widespread poverty is a major cause of harmful child labour in developing countries. Government at all levels should channel resources to poverty eradication. If poverty level of household can be eradicated, child labour will also be reduced.

Government should provide and enforce qualitative but compulsory education at all level especially in rural areas. The Girl-child education policy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that is geared toward ensuring Girl-child goes to school should be vigorously pursued by the Government.

The federal Government of Nigeria Home Grown feeding programme that is geared toward providing one meal per day for children should be supported by legislature so that it can boost pupil enrolment in primary schools and reduce child labour in the society.

There should be binding legislation against child labour and such regulations be enforced to stop families from sending their children out to work.

Also, public awareness should be raised by government and Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) to include improving child knowledge of work hazards, raising parental awareness of the human capital loss that may be associated with child labour and changing the emphasis of policy makers.

Finally, more schools should be built for the almajiris and they should be made to attend those schools and more awareness should be created through mass media about the importance for education and the social and health implications of child labour.

#### XI. CONCLUSION

This study has proved that child labour persist in Ondo State not because of shortage of man power as was the case of Europe and North America, but because the socio-economic environment. It has also proved that the poor are most vulnerable due to low income to sustain their large family. The effects are the high rate insecurity in the country infested by this group of people; rape, drugs and thuggery. Such hopeless population will yield into any kind of vices that could affect the socio-economy situation of the country. The menace of Boko Haram, armed banditry and other armed militants have posed a very serious threat to socio-economic growth in Nigeria.

Nigerian governments and non-governmental agencies have demonstrated considerable interests and concerns on the problems of child labour in the country, and have suggested practical strategies and policies to put an end to or minimize the scourge of child labour, but their efforts seem not to be adequate as the situation worsens on daily basis due to traditional beliefs, greed, cultural, religious, political instability and economic recession. It is therefore

beckoned on government to apply the recommendations above in order to reduce the problems of child labour in Nigeria.

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